comparison of these systems is not valid. Indian Railways do not have any definite data regarding Chinese Railways.

Progress on Chandigarh—Ludhiana Rail Line

3789. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased as state whether any progress has been made on Chandigarh—Ludhiana, via Morinda, rail line for which the Railways Minister had laid stone at the time of inauguration, at Mohali last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): The progress is as follows:

(i) Rs. 3.5 crore have been deposited with the State Govt. of Punjab for acquisition of land. Part of land required for the project is expected to be available by Sept. 2000.

(ii) Rs. 1.15 crore has also been deposited with Union Territory Administration of Chandigarh for acquisition of land. The land is expected to be available by June, 2000, after removal of encroachments.

(iii) The Geotechincal investigations, preparation of drawings and calling of tenders are in progress.

The work will start after the land is handed over to the Railways by the concerned authorities.

Bankura-Beliatore Gauge Conversion Project

3790. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1825 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 17th December, 1999 and to state:

(a) whether the first phase of work on the gauge conversion project from Bankura to Belialore (20 km.), part estimate for which had been received and was under process in the Railway Board for sanction, has since been finalised;

(b) if so, what is the status of the work; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay and by when it is expected to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The part-Detailed Estimate for the first phase of work on the Bankura Damodar River (BDR) Railway Gauge Conversion

project, viz., from Bankura to Deliatorc (20 Km.) has been sanctioned. Five tenders for earthwork and minor bridges for km. 0.6 to km. 20 have been finalised. Tenders for soil exploration and temporary office buildings are in the process of being awarded.

Direct Trains for State Capitals

3791. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capitals of every State have been connected by direct trains;

(b) if not, the State capitals connected and not connected with direct trains; and

(c) whether Government would arrange a direct train to Gandhinagar (Gujarat) in the Millennium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Srinagar, Gangtok, Kohima, Imphal, Itanagar, Agartala, Shillong and Panjim are not connected to the Railway network. Shimla and Gandhinagar are not linked with Delhi by direct train. The remaining state capitals are connected to Delhi by direct services.

(c) Introduction of a direct train between Delhi and Gandhinagar is not feasible, at present, due to operational constraints.

Loss of Railways for provision for concessions

3792. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how much loss is incurred by Railway on the provision for concession to the disabled and aged persons, annually;

(b) whether Government had constituted Reivew Task Force to review the plethora of concessions and if so, the details of recommendations made by the Task Force; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The exact figures relating to loss of revenue on account